

**RHODE ISLAND
SCHOOL AND DISTRICT
ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM**

**K-2 TECHNICAL MANUAL
2005**

**THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION**
*Office of
Assessment and Accountability*

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Commissioner

CONTEXT

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires that all schools be held accountable for teaching reading and mathematics to all students. Rhode Island has developed a comprehensive accountability and assessment system, as required, for grades 4, 8, and 11 in reading and mathematics. For schools that do not contain a grade 4, a similar accountability and assessment system was designed to include these schools in the classification system.

Beginning in the 2003-2004 school year, schools where the highest grade was K, 1, 2, or 3 were required to assess their students in reading using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) published by Pearson Learning Group. The third grade was the only grade assessed with the Balanced Assessment in Mathematics (BAM) (published by CTB McGraw Hill) because that assessment was not developed for grades K-2.

During the 2004-2005 school year, only schools where the highest grade was K, 1, or 2 were required to be assessed since the newly-developed NECAP tests would incorporate grade 3. The NECAP tests in Reading and Mathematics assess the Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) of the previous year (grade 3 GLEs are tested at the beginning of grade 4). Because of this design, the scores of the NECAP assessments will be attributed back one grade (grade 3 scores would be attributed to grade 2, etc.). This led us to believe that the second grade DRA scores would not be needed this year because NECAP testing and classifications would be done within the same school year.

Because of the heavy test development load on the state, schools, and students, RIDE submitted a transition plan to the USDOE to shift the testing window to the Fall. Secretary Spellings approved the plan with the condition that all schools not being tested must still be classified. The data used for this classification would be attendance data. For this reason, second grade schools will be classified using their attendance data; just like the grade 4 and 8 schools. For this reason, the grade span used in this Technical Bulletin will be K-1.

The 2005–2006 school year will be the first year the NECAP will be operational. At that time, schools in which the highest grade is grade 2 or 3 will not be required to administer either the DRA because the NECAP assessment battery will include grade 2 GLEs.

However, schools in which the highest grade is grade K or 1 will continue to administer the DRA.

When the NECAP assessments become operational, one accountability system will be designed and all schools will be subject to these rules.

Performance Levels

Student scores on the DRA are converted into RI's Proficiency Scale. The established Index Proficiency Scale and the corresponding Intermediate Goals and Annual Measurable Objectives for the Elementary ELA (*Figures 1 and 2*) will be used for the K-1 assessments. This allowed us to assign the appropriate Index Proficiency Score as described in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Rhode Island's Index Proficiency Scale

Performance Levels	Index Proficiency Score
Achieved the Standard with Honors	100
Achieved the Standard	100
Nearly Achieved the Standard	75
Below the Standard	50
Little Evidence of Achievement	25
No Score	0

Figure 2: Chart of Elementary Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

Year	ELA
2014	100%
2013	96.1
2012	92.1
2011	88.1
2010	84.1
2009	84.1
2008	84.1
2007	80.1
2006	80.1
2005	80.1
2004	76.1
2003	76.1
2002 Baseline	76.1

DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL READING ASSESSMENT (DRA)

One of the reasons the DRA was chosen as the primary tool to assess reading was due to its potential to impact instructional methods in the classroom. The DRA is administered in a one-on-one conference between the teacher and the student. The teacher then records the student's responses in the DRA Online Management System (OMS) and receives instant feedback on the reading strengths and weaknesses of the student in the areas of comprehension, reading fluency, oral reading, and reading strategies. The resulting data combines these factors to calculate a reading level and an accuracy rate. For accountability purposes, we used the reading level as the indicator of proficiency; the accuracy rate reflects how smoothly a student can read and is based on the number of mistakes a student makes when reading. The fluency rate subtest is not part of a school's total score. This subtest provides separate instructional information that is not combined with the other data to yield a total score.

The appropriate reading levels for each grade were based on the information Pearson Learning Group provided us regarding the grade-level appropriate texts used during the administration. This guidance, in combination with the time of administration and performance levels required to be a successful reader, were used to develop cut points. Below is the chart of reading levels for grades K-1 and the cut points we established.

Figure 3: Reading Levels and Cut Points for the DRA (insert chart)

		Kindergarten			Pre-Primer				Primer		1st Grade		2nd Grade				3rd Grade			4th Grade	
	Reading Level	A	1	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	24	28	30	34	38	40	44
Grade Level	K																				
	1																				
	2																				
	3	Little Evidence											Below	Nearly			Achieved			Honors	

ALLOWABLE EXEMPTIONS

LEP Students in the U.S. for Less Than One Year: These students are exempt from participating in the DRA if they have entered the U.S. after June 30th of the prior year. These students' scores will be used in calculating the participation rate but not used in calculating the Index Score. However, these students must participate in the Mathematics exam.

Medically Exempt Students: These students have medical issues that prevent them from taking any of the assessments that make up the Rhode Island State Assessment Program. The superintendent, on behalf of the student, submits a letter outlining the student's medical condition and sends it to MaryAnn Snider, Director of the Office of Assessment and Accountability. Once approved, that student is then removed from the enrollment roster of that school for purposes of accountability calculations.

Home-schooled Students: Home-schooled students may have an arrangement with the district to be tested. However, these students, and their scores, are removed from all accountability calculations for the school and the district.

Students Enrolled after October 1st: These students are removed from enrollment rosters and their scores are not used in accountability calculations of the school. However, these students are counted for the basic participation rate calculations.

CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOLS

The decision rules around classifying schools as *High*, *Middle*, or *In Need of Improvement* were also retained for the K-1 system. This means that we used the established 4th grade AMOs for the classifications of the K-1 schools. The Elementary AMOs are more appropriate (rather than creating new AMOs) because the small number of students tested would result in inappropriately inflated AMOs for the K-1 schools. Also, to rank-order these schools in order to establish new AMOs would create an artificial division between schools and would mislabel some as *In Need of Improvement* when in fact they were *Moderately Performing*. In short, it would create false inequities among a very small group of schools.

By using the established system, we will keep the new information to a minimum as well as provide an "apples-to-apples" approach for districts wishing to compare the performance of their K-1 schools to their upper elementary schools and to identify opportunities for improvement in reading programs.

Schools with second grades will be classified according to their attendance data which districts submitted to RIDE on June 30, 2005.

NCLB legislation gives greater latitude to states for making accountability decisions regarding K-1 schools. RI has decided that the following data elements will be used to classify schools:

1. School-level Index Scores
2. Participation Rates for the DRA
3. Attendance Rates

We will not use disaggregated data due to the small numbers of students in these schools.

Data from the 2005 October 1st enrollment will be used for those schools administering the DRA and using the Online Management System. This data will be uploaded by RIDE in November and, once uploaded, the maintenance of the DRA Online System will be the sole responsibility of the schools. As we did last year, schools are responsible for informing me if students moved before or during the testing window **and** do not have a score or qualify for the Alternate Assessment in the second grade.